



# SHAVINGS, SAWDUST and SPLINTERS

April 1999

## Coming

### September 3 and 4, 1999

(Friday & Saturday)

### Albuquerque, New Mexico

## The biggest tool meet west of the Mid-West

Hosted by:

Rocky Mountain Tool Collectors

South-West Tool Collectors Association

P.A.S.T. (California tool collectors)

Area I, L, O of Mid-West Tool Collectors Association

For information call Bill McDougall @ (505) 344- 9272

RMTC members will receive a special mailing in July  
with complete information on this meeting. This is the  
principal meeting of the year for RMTC.

## A Call for Book Reviewers:

Astragal Press, a major publisher of books relating to old tools, has made three of their newest publications available to us for review. Could you help by writing a short review of one of these? The books are available now. We would like to have reviews of these books in the August issue of *SHAVINGS, SAWDUST and SPLINTERS*. Which is of interest to you?

### ***SLIDE RULES, Their History, Models, & Makers*** by Peter M. Hopp

Includes information on

- makers, manufacturers, retailers
- history
- patents, designs

### ***AMERICAN WRENCH MAKERS*** by Kenneth L. Cope

Includes information on

- history, periods of operation, models produced
- exclusive Wrench Identification System
- cross-reference of patent dates and trade names
- period illustrations

### ***MORE MAKERS OF AMERICAN MACHINIST'S TOOLS*** by

Kenneth L. Cope

A sequel to two previous books on machinist's tools by Ken Cope

- hundreds of additional makers
- illustrations of unknown tools
- new material on B & S, Sawyer, Standard Tool, Starrett, Stevens

If you take a book to review, timely completion of is important. Contact Cliff Fales

## **in this issue:**

- Molding Planes: Cabinet-maker vs. Joiner
- Tools of the Rocky Mountains: Hillman Combination tool
- Book Review: *Traditional Woodworking Handtools*
- Colorado Area Meeting Recaps
- Crane Auction: new owners
- Letter: from Dave Grunig

## Welcome, New Members!

Mrs. Judy Friedman (Jericho, VT)

Duane Hermanson (Littleton, CO)

Mr. Warren Kothenbeutel  
(Aurora, CO)

Mr. Harold Lowe (Limon, CO)

Mr. Norman McDowell  
(Albuquerque, NM)

Mr. Gerald D. Sewick (Aurora, CO)

Mr. Todd Vinzant (Golden, CO)

## Glad to have you back!

Mr. Walter Clyburn  
(Albuquerque, NM)

RMTC membership now totals 211

## SHAVINGS, SAWDUST & SPLINTERS

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**Internet Web Site:**

[www.unm.edu/~tr1005/index.htm](http://www.unm.edu/~tr1005/index.htm)

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# Cabinet Moldings vs. Joiner's Moldings

By Lee Richmond

One of the most common mistakes among woodworking tool collectors, and especially molding plane collectors, is the identification of a tool as a cabinetmaker's, joiner's, or carpenter's tool. Since cabinetmaking is widely regarded as a more glamorous profession, most collectors will try to convince themselves that any tool that might possibly have been used by a cabinetmaker, was in fact originally owned and used by a cabinetmaker. Statistics, however, are against them.

Using the traditional definitions, a cabinetmaker is a craftsperson who builds furniture, while the role of a joiner is to create the fine interior trim and appointments on buildings, after the carpenter has completed the structural work. For example, someone who builds kitchen cabinets is a joiner, not a cabinetmaker.

In the nineteenth century, when most fine collectible tools were made, joiners were at the peak of their prosperity, while cabinetmaking with hand tools was a dying art, especially in the United States. Even by the 1830s, small cabinet shops were fighting a desperate, and losing battle, with larger mechanized shops relying on water or steam power. There were of course many carpenters, however, the tools of a typical carpenter's kit would be fewer in number and generally less delicate than those of the other two trades. Thus, most of the fine woodworking tools that we collect must have originally been used by joiners, and not cabinetmakers.

In most cases the distinction of ownership for a tool is irrelevant, since the tools were interchangeable. For example, since both cabinetmakers and joiners used traditional joints, such as dovetailed or mortise and tenon, the saws and chisels used for these joints would have been the same regardless of the trade.

When it comes to molding planes, however, the differences are more real. These differences were necessitated by the different types of woods, and the different application of the

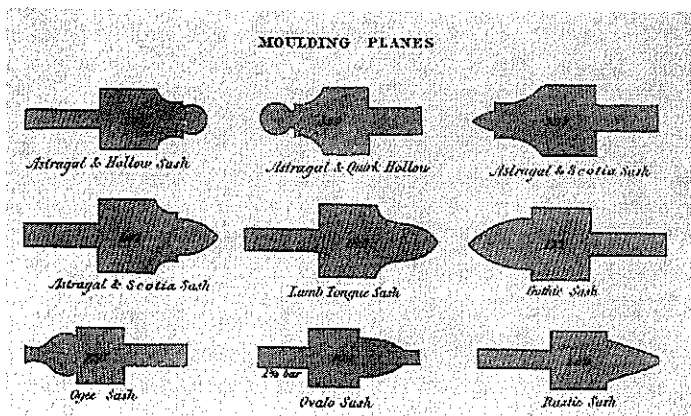
..... most of the fine  
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two trades. Joiners usually worked with softwoods such as pine (deal in England) or poplar, which would ultimately be painted. Cabinetmakers typically worked with hard woods that would not be painted. From the perspective of molding planes, these are two significant differences.

To avoid tear-out in hard woods it is preferable to have a steeper pitch to the iron. Molding planes with this steeply set iron are scarce today, and are more commonly found on earlier molders, which correlates with the

low and shrinking proportion of cabinetmakers to joiners. The question is often asked, "why not set all irons at a steeper pitch?" A steeper pitch makes the plane much harder to push, and for the joiner, who would have been cutting much more lineage than a cabinetmaker, it would have greatly increased his work load. This difference in effort required is so pronounced, that even among planes clearly intended for cabinetmaking, the pitch may still be set at a normal angle. The common iron bedding angle for general purpose work is about 45 degrees. An

extra 5 degrees was often marketed by British makers as York pitch. Yet another 5 degrees was marketed as Cabinet pitch. While all planes with more than common pitch are scarce, American planes with a steeper pitch are even more scarce. Again, statistically this makes sense, since the United States was much quicker than Britain and the rest of the world, to abandon hand-made furniture in favor of mass-produced factory products.



More subtle than the pitch of the iron in distinguishing a cabinetmaker's molding plane from a joiner's is the molding itself. Both groups had, for the most part, the same basic profiles in their repertoire. As a general statement, cabinetmakers tended to favor smaller moldings, that could be used for furniture trim, and joiners typically would have owned most of the wide molders. For example, 1/8" beads, which are relatively scarce today, had limited utility for a joiner, but were frequently

**CABINET vs. JOINER'S** *continued from p. 3*

used by cabinetmakers as a door edge molding on such things as corner cabinets. A small bead like this was almost always used on a door edge of a heavily used piece of furniture, because as the fit deteriorates with wear, or wood movement, the molding tends to obscure minor imperfections of fit.

Because joiners usually painted their work, and cabinetmakers did not, the shape of the molding itself is the most important clue of all. Moldings with sharply defined features would not be suitable for painting, and thus were likely used for cabinetmaking. Most molding planes have small flats at the point of any sharp angle, such as the tip of a piece of boxing. This is because when the molding was painted, these flats would fill in and create the impression of a sharp angle. With true cabinetmaker's planes so scarce, joiners molding planes can still be used on furniture reproductions, but to be authentic to the period, should be done in such a way that paint flats are not left exposed.

In light of the difficulty in definitively stating a planes original useage, it seems especially disappointing that the vast wealth of information contained in maker's marks has never been effectively harnessed. Admittedly, this would be a prodigious undertaking, but a cataloging of all known directories of craftsmen would be of great benefit to all collectors and scholars of antique tools. Even with such a database, the ambiguity of many owner's stamps, such as "J. Smith," mean that we must still look to a planes more subtle details for clues to its original ownership.

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*The author, Lee Richmond, has been using and collecting tools for as long as he can remember. Lee became actively involved with the world collecting fraternity about 15 years ago, and has served several years as president of PATINA. Lee's collecting interests focus on fine cabinetmaking tools, complimenting his interest in period furniture. Lee has also been dealing in tools for most of this time, and for the last two years has been primarily selling through his web site, The Best Things, which can be viewed at [www.thebestthings.com](http://www.thebestthings.com).*

**About your RMTC dues and membership:**

Did you know.....

- some clubs charge a fee for members to attend meetings?
- some clubs do not allow visitors at meetings?
- some clubs retain a commission from members' auctions? - RMTC retains a commission only from auctions at the Annual Meeting

**Aren't you glad you are a member of RMTC?**

**A Letter from Dave Grunig**

Portales, New Mexico

January 14, 1999

Dear Grace, John, and all of my tool collecting friends in Colorado.

The IDEA was pretty simple. Sell the house in Boulder a some obscene high price to one of those generation X folks (whoever they are) and go down to a more friendly climate and surroundings. So I bought this nice place on the edge of the town I grew up in. Not for old friends — my classmates have smoked too many cigarettes and drank too much cheap whiskey to live very long. I'm told that there are half dozen or so still around but I have not seen them. Anyway for \$70,000 I bought a place at the edge of town somewhat the equivalent of my Boulder house. Then when the dust settled I would have a nice place to live and about \$200,000 to buy tools with.

The REALISM was that I had too much of what we in America call "stuff." My late wife's things, my deceased daughter's things, my son's things ..... and so on. Then there was my tool collection. Gawd! I didn't realize how many planes, hammers, and other useless articles that I paid good money for that I had, and at more than 3500 lbs. I called a representative of one of the moving companies to come and give me an estimate on the cost to whisk it away the no-pain, no-fuss way. Well, ..... he said. I'd say you are looking at a minimum of \$20,000, maybe around \$25, but I don't think more than \$30,000.

I can't afford that; I'll move it myself. I did. Most of it. There is another couple of trailer loads for next spring. Let this be a thing for compulsive tool collectors to be aware of. There is a price someone must pay — maybe it's your widow or your children, but someone will have a problem.

In about 18 months I will have the place all remodeled and brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century with a nice display room for at least the more interesting things. I don't know about the very large number of bits I've got. I suppose I could weld them all into some fantastic sculpture and donate it to Eastern New Mexico University which is only a few blocks away.

I will miss the meetings and the friendship of all of you but I'll try to be at every semi-annual meeting if I can.

My best wishes to all of you.

Dave

**An update for your membership book.**

Please retain and insert the enclosed up-date page into your membership book.

## From the president:

### Past-Due Thanks

I'm a little slow on the uptake, but better late than never as the saying goes. I'd like to recognize some people for their efforts in making my job a lot easier. At the top of the list is Steve Butti for all the work he put into the new membership directory and web site. He has put in many hours with Grace Goss on the directory and Jason Fink on the web site. Thanks, Steve! Speaking of Grace, she puts more time keeping the club running than anyone. Thanks, Grace! Then there is Cliff Fales; without him we probably would not have an organized club. Plus, his presentation on finding tool information using the computer and the internet at the last meeting was a big help. Steve Scruggs & John Goss also pitch it to help on many things.

### Annual Meeting

The planning for the Annual Meeting is under way — Thanks to Bill McDougall and Dave and Connie Fessler. Bill has taken on the challenge of putting together the meeting. The P.A.S.T. tool collectors club of California, SOUTH-WEST TOOL COLLECTORS ASSOCIATION and MID-WEST TOOL COLLECTORS (Area I, L, O) will be jointly sponsoring the meeting with RMTC in Albuquerque on September 3 & 4. The sponsorship of this meeting by three groups creates the potential for a larger group of sellers (and buyers) than we usually see, so you will have a great opportunity there for buying/selling/trading. Please make an effort to be there. We also need some volunteers to help make this run smoothly; please let me (or Bill McDougall) know if you can help.

### Missouri Valley Wrench Club

I will be attending the meeting of the Missouri Valley Wrench Club, April 16 in York, Nebraska. I'll let you know what you missed.

### Nagging on Colorado Area Meeting Etiquette

The board requests that you do not set up your sales tables before the assigned meeting time listed on the Colorado Area meeting notice. If you will adhere to this request it gives everyone an equal chance to purchase available items. #2 - Please wear a name badge. #3 - Please mark prices on tools for sale.

### Executive Board

Your board is trying to meet at least on a quarterly basis or whenever is needed to address issues that come up. Things seem pretty good as we already have over 210 members. If you would like to share your ideas or opinions on any topic please don't hesitate to contact me or other board members. We will try to keep you informed on what is being considered and what actions are taken.

Good Luck collecting,

John Gilmore

## *January Colorado Area Meeting*

January 10

Seventh Day Adventist Church, Arvada

By John Goss

The following is strictly hear-say as I was not at this meeting. I wish to thank Wendy Maier and Grace Goss for telling me the following lies. I understand that the hosts, Bill Morrison (who also found and made arrangements with the Seventh Day Adventist Church in Arvada for the meeting room), John Walter and Greg Mikulewicz (who supplied a million miles of those wonderful shriveled up sausages) put on as fine a display of eatables one could ask for and plenty of washables (beverages) also! Thanks for a great job!!

I understand there were the usual 80ish in attendance, however due to the size of the meeting area most believed the attendance was down - not so !!

There were a number of great displays as follows:

- Cliff Fales - patented spiral screwdrivers from Philadelphia, c. 1880s
- Don Biays - Peerless lathe chuck set, "The Simonds Saw," Buck & Co. saw, Stiletto plane, Stanley #289 plane
- Bob Finch - 15 different types of drills, bow, 3 pumps: stone fly wheel, 2 brass fly wheel, bent shaft, patented
- John Gilmore - C.S.L. Kennedy tack hammer (pat. Nov 10, 1903, C.S. Osborne 1/8" hammer
- King Herrington - combination tools for fencing and windmill
- Stan McAlister - whasit table

Steve Butti's macarena talk on rust removal kept the crowds interest with lots of questions afterwards — does this mean we have lots of rusty tools?

The members' auction was given a bit of spice as our infamous auctioneer Scruggs held a round robin bid on an item, one time around. Item went for \$300..... What was it ??

## **New Board Members Appointed**

At the January 1999 meeting of the RMTC board of directors, Ralph "Doc" Loyd (1999-2000) and Fred Mares (1999) were appointed to fill two vacancies which existed on the board. The positions became vacant when board members John Gilmore and Steve Butti were elected to the positions of president and vice-president for years 1999 & 2000.

**HANDTOOLS** *continued from p. 6*

Three examples: crosscutting a long board is more easily accomplished with a hand saw; hand planing a wood surface may take more time, but does produce a smoother and cleaner surface than any machining or sanding could, and third, making a few lineal feet of molding with wooden molding planes is quicker and leaves a smoother and cleaner surface than using a shaper or router and sanding. Tranquility and the smell of fresh shavings are just two of the rewards of using traditional handtools.

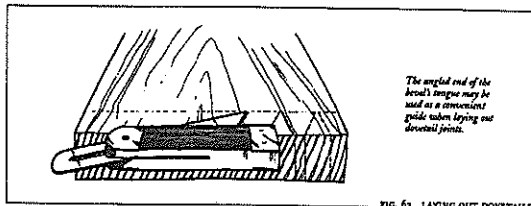


FIG. 61 LAYING OUT DOVETAILES

"No self-respecting hand saw user should ever be content to let someone else sharpen his or her saw" is one of Graham's admonitions, and he proceeds to tell us exactly how to sharpen a saw from jointing, to shaping, to setting, and to filing (and what number file to use). These steps are explained in a way that is thorough and easily understandable. And, this is followed with lessons on how to use saws properly. He emphasizes that unless you have a properly sharpened hand saw and know how to use it, you might falsely believe that power saws are always better. For crosscut and rip saws, there is a discussion of the significance of how a blade is ground; how the teeth are shaped; the blade's width, weight, and length; and the shape of the handle. Finally, Graham tells us how to pick the best from a pile of rusty saws in a flea market.

Graham has favorite tools and disliked tools, and he certainly has no love for modern handtools with their uncomfortable handles, cheap blades, and plastic handles. In his chapter on chisels he speculates that Japanese chisels have become popular not because they have better steel, but because they have exotic-wood handles. The same passion for perfection in our tools has created a market for new tools that are either reproductions of old tools, or made to match the standards and quality of materials found in old tools. From his chapter on gauges I've concluded that his ideal marking gauge would have a round stem; a brass-faced, round head with double convex nubs on its reverse side to permit working on curved surfaces; an adjustable

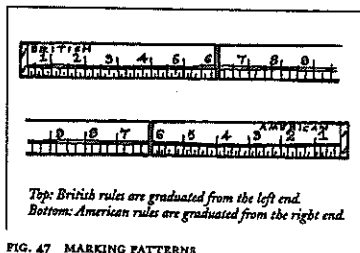


FIG. 47 MARKING PATTERNS

pin; and a British-style, countersunk, slotted pivot screw. I've never seen a gauge with all of these features (the earliest William's patent gauge by Stanley had everything but the nubs), but now I'll be looking for one (in rosewood, of course). Other favorites he mentions are the two-foot, four-fold rule, the Stanley universal shave, the Stanley Odd Jobs, and the Japanese

marking knife. Useless, is his opinion of the oval carpenter's pencil, that is, unless you're an advertiser and pass them out free! He also dislikes using old wooden spokeshaves and the modern bullnose plane.

Sixteen chapters are devoted to planes, primarily wooden ones. All of the different planes a woodworker would want to know about covered thoroughly, with the emphasis on how to take care of them and what you can do with them, especially the hand preparation of stock. I struggled with the overlap of Chapters 15-17, as each one deals, in part, with the conversion of rough stock to finished pieces. This duplication arises because each chapter had been originally published as a stand-alone article. I wish Graham had chosen to rewrite them. Nevertheless, you will learn the part played by scrub, jack, joiner, and smoothing planes in this process. And, the workings and tuning of each plane is explained in depth. It's really the same as with saws: put a properly tuned plane in the hands of a knowledgeable artisan, and good things will happen.

Bench planes are described as "masterpieces of sophisticated design honed to perfection by centuries of practical experience." It's ironic that perfection in the form of dovetailed, stuffed bench planes from Spiers and Norris was achieved just as power-tool technology was advancing to take their place. For all

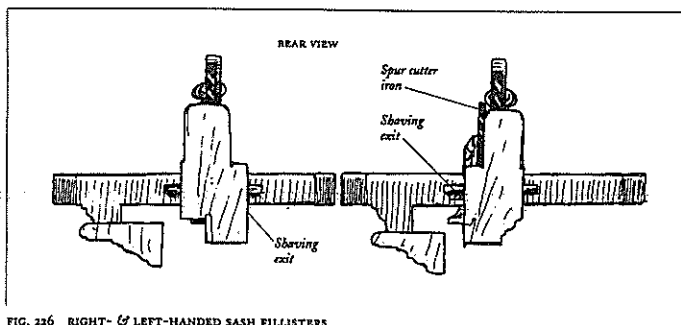


FIG. 226 RIGHT- &amp; LEFT-HANDED SASH FILLETSTERS

forms of bench planes, Graham relates the design of the irons, mouth, wedge, and throat to the plane's performance.

I found the history of the aristocratic sash filletster plane very interesting. I never knew there were left and right-handed versions (See illustration.). In fact, I wasn't sure exactly how sash was made. Traditionally, the British cut the rabbet that held the glass and then cut the moulding. The American sash plane made both of these cuts in one pass, so British sash filletsters are more common than American ones. To make both cuts without reversing the stock, the British developed the right-hand sash filletster to cut a rabbet on the far side of the stock. The plane was later modified so that the iron would be visible when cutting the rabbet by moving the mouth to the left side of the filletster's body. This was called the left-handed sash filletster. Both had depth stops: mortised in the body on the right-hand version and fixed to the left side on the left-handed version. The skew of the iron was reversed on the left-handed version, which required the addition of a nicker. This is good stuff!

## Your Country Auctioneer Has New Owners

By Hank Allen

At the Cabin Fever Auction in Nashua on February 20, Richard Crane introduced the three partners who have just acquired Your Country Auctioneer, the firm Richard started in 1973.

Many of you know one of the partners, Paul Wilmott, who has been auctioning with Richard for the past seven years. He's an excellent auctioneer, and is well liked by the collectors who gather for the Crane auctions. We have counted on Paul to pick up the pace in the Crane auctions, where he comfortably breezes through 125 lots per hour. I think his presence in the partnership as head auctioneer will be comforting to collectors and help toward a smooth transition. Also, Lee Murray will be acting as an advisor and consultant for a time.

The other two partners, Steve (Mitch) Mitchell and Gary Yeaton, (pronounced Yettin) have an auction business in Allenstown, New Hampshire named Time & Strike Auction Company. Up to now Time & Strike has specialized in clocks and watches, but has auctioned general antiques and estate liquidations as well. Steve and Gary hold auctions in their Gallery in Allenstown, New Hampshire, which you will not find on your map but is just outside Concord.

Steve is a watchmaker and clockmaker and has been in that business since 1984. He completed a four-year apprenticeship to Dan Bosworth, and they are now partners in the repair and restoration business of Mitchell and Bosworth. He knows watch and clockmaking tools and uses them everyday of his life. Steve also knows computers and will be handling all of the computer work with Your Country Auctioneer.

Gary has restored antique furniture for 20 years in Concord. He has also bought and sold antique furniture for individual customers. Gary's tall clock case restoration for Steve led to their partnership in Time & Strike in August of 1997. Gary knows antique woodworking tools. He has been attending Crane auctions and acquiring tools for 20 years. Many were tools that he used in his restoration work, but he's a collector as well.

The partners know that change is necessary. They are aware that, to be attractive to collectors, a quality catalog auction requires the consignment of a significant tool collection. They are prepared to compete aggressively for collections, and their new commission structure will reflect this. In fact, they've had some successes already.

Your Country Auctioneer has not used color photographs in their catalogs to present their most attractive offerings, and are behind the other catalog auctioneers in the number of tools that are pictured. An improved catalog is in the plans for the future at Your Country Auctioneer.

Steve will be setting up a website this summer to serve collectors. In addition to the usual offerings on a website, absentee bidding on line is one of several other things under consideration. And, computer checkout at auctions will be

introduced.

One of Richard Crane's priorities was to keep the business in New Hampshire, and he was successful. The April and September auctions will continue to be in Nashua. The annual July Flea Market and Sale will be held at the Crane barn in Hillsboro. This year a three-day event is planned for July 16, 17 and 18. Their listed auctions will be held in Allenstown, near Concord.

The new partnership understands what has to be done to be successful in the tool auctioning business, and they've told me that they will do everything possible to achieve that goal. You can reach any of them at Your Country Auctioneer, 112 Granite Street, PO Box 159, Allenstown, New Hampshire 03257, or call them at 603-485-2800. Their personal phone numbers are: Gary 603-228-4840, Paul 603-746-6749, and Steve 603-224-6150.

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*The above article is reprinted, with permission, from the April 1999 issue of THE TOOL SHED of CRAFTS of New Jersey. Hank Allen is editor of THE TOOL SHED and is also a member of RMTC.*

### BLACKBURN continued from p. 7

History emerges from time-to-time in the book. Do you know why the British say cramp, shooting board, and rebate and Americans say clamp, chute board, and rabbet? Do you know what the Romans called the square? Do you know that "bevel square" is an oxymoron? Do you know that British and American rules are graduated in opposite directions? Do you know what an "apron tool" is? Do you know that "plough" planes were made in America? How about "York pitch"?

It's all there, and makes the book much more enjoyable to read.

In conclusion, I'd like to thank Graham for asking me to review his book. It's been a pleasure. You should check it out to see if it would be a pleasure for you too.

- Reviewed by Hank Allen

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